

**Developmental Disabilities Services State Program Standing Committee Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2014
Comfort Inn, Berlin, Vermont**

Members Present: Kyle Moriarty, Max Barrows, Joe Greenwald, Anne Bakeman, Nicole LeBlanc, Theresa Wood, Ed Place, Bethany Drum, Barbara Prine, Julie Cunningham, Greg Mairs, Linda Berger.

DDSD Staff: Chris O'Neill, Jeff Coy, Joy Barrett, Jennie Masterson, Camille George

Guests: James Smith, Kay Stambler, Marlys Waller, Marie Zura, Karen Topper, Tracy Thrasher, Jeanette Hurdle, Kirsten Murphy, Karen Schwartz, Rich Atkinson, Lisa Maynes.

I. Review of July Minutes: The minutes of the July SPSC meeting were reviewed. Bethany Drum moved to accept the minutes; and Nicole LeBlanc seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously accepted.

II. Key Changes to the Developmental Disabilities Services State System of Care Plan

Camille reviewed the key changes to the new DDS State System of Care Plan, including: a change to the funding priority for employment, expanding the opportunity to apply for funding for employment supports not just upon graduation from high school, but through transition age (19-26) and reinstatement of the Employment Conversion Initiative to help cover the difference in the higher cost for employment supports when people wish to convert some of their other supports to employment. There was also some additional information added to the plan about other resources and supports that are available broadly to people with developmental disabilities and a lot of clarification about funding guidance that providers must follow when delivering services. There were also separate sections incorporated, one which focuses more on operational activities that the Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) shall take to strengthen and support services as well as system development activities, such as supporting consumer and provider involvement in the development of Integrated Family Services (IFS) and Health Care Reform. Camille also noted that special initiatives DDSD would like to carry out over the course of the plan are included on page 28.

This led to questions and a discussion about the recent reductions to the state budget that impact DDS. The reductions include the elimination of the Medicaid Bump, which was intended to help providers increase pay for staff as well as an approximately 50% reduction to one-time funds. Members were concerned about how the reduction to one-time funds will impact both services to individuals and the special initiatives that are hoped to be implemented. In terms of public input, no formal public hearing is required; however, Camille will seek input from the SPSC as the year progresses (funds accumulate over the course of the year) for their input about how best to use any available funds. June Bascom is currently working on a summary of how one-time funds were used last year. This report will be shared with the SPSC and there will be more discussion with this information available.

II. Designation Process

Chris O'Neill provided an overview of the DDSD Designation Process a handout was provided. Those present gave a lot of input to the quality team related to the designation process. It was strongly suggested that the information from the consumer satisfaction survey be systematically reviewed as

part of this process. The committee takes its role very seriously and wants to understand what that role is, and wants to work with the State and others to improve the process. Currently, the designation process is coordinated with the Department of Mental Health. There will be further discussions with the SPSC and between DAIL and DMH about how the designation process currently works, and how it should work in the future.

III. Designation of Washington County Mental Health

Mary Moulton, Julie Martin and Rachel Colby from WCMH joined the SPSC for the review of the agency's designation report. A copy of the report had been provided to the SPSC in advance of the meeting. Jeff Coy from DDSD reviewed the key findings and highlights of the quality services review. Specific questions from the SPSC included how new people who are recruited for the local standing committee, how supervision occurs broadly, not just where some of the individual findings were discussed. Jeff Coy made special note of WCMH's very comprehensive quality plan. A 15% sample of consumers was reviewed and the DDSD team explained that they try to get a representative sample of people served in creating the sample. One person who was part of the sample shared that he had a good experience and interview and that the DDSD interviewer made sure all of his and his mother's thoughts were heard. Jeff also pointed out that with regards to the finding related to 4.9.7 (Treatment Plans that Comply with Practice Guidelines and Records Standards), there were initially some review team questions about whether budgets were individualized for people who were attending the CDS Learning Network. Jeff received clarifying information about the budgets before the SPSC meeting from Allison Hayford and Julie Martin from WCMHS. The report will be revised based on the additional information and the deficiency related to individualized budgets will be excised. Rachel talked about the positive experience she had in the past going to the Learning Network and asked about the future of programs such as that. If it is a service that works for people, it can be included into people's plans and budgets. Julie noted that there are evening shows of local artists that are open to the public and may be of interest to others. Max Barrows reviewed the feedback provided to GMSA from people who receive services from (WCMH). A copy of the feedback was provided. Two other people present also spoke highly about the services and people working with them; and a staff person talked about how supported she feels by the agency and appreciative she is of the on-going training that she receives, particularly around augmentative communication. The SPSC voted on the recommendation regarding WCMH's designation with the following outcome; 10 - re-designate, 3 re-designate, minor.

IV. Report out of the DS Work Group on Employment

Jennie Masterson presented (by phone) the report from the DS Work Group on Employment. James Smith from VR also joined for this conversation. A handout was provided. The pilot is designed to be a hands-on employer-education and awareness process. By giving employers specific skills and knowledge needed to help their supported employees be successful, it is predicted that work site cultures will increase their responsiveness to creating and expanding natural supports for their employees with developmental disabilities. Some members recommended instead of using the one-time funding, to incorporate funding into each person's existing waiver, but to think about using one-time if there is additional training needed for employers and/or to augment some of the additional monitoring/supported employment supports. It was also suggested that 2 groups (one of more mature workers and one of people who are newer to the employment market). It was also stressed that it will be important to be aware of possible safety concerns and people who choose to participate in this type of model know what to do, who to go to, if they are concerned about their safety.